

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-503. Licensing Routes.

R277-503-1. Definitions.

A. "Alternative Routes to Licensure (ARL) advisors" mean a USOE specialist with specific professional development and educator licensing expertise, and a USOE-designated curriculum specialist.

B. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

C. "Competency-based" means a teacher training approach structured for an individual to master and demonstrate content and teaching skills and knowledge at the individual's own pace and sometimes in alternative settings.

D. "Educational Testing Service (ETS)" is a worldwide educational testing and measurement organization.

E. "Endorsement" means a qualification based on content area mastery obtained through a higher education major or minor or through a state-approved endorsement program.

F. "LEA" means a local education agency, including local school boards/public school districts, charter schools, and for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

G. "Letter of authorization" means a formal approval given to an individual such as an out-of-state candidate or a first year ARL candidate who is employed by an LEA in a position requiring a professional educator license who has not completed the requirements for an ARL license or a Level 1, 2, or 3 license or who has not completed necessary endorsement requirements.

H. "Level 1 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued upon completion of an approved preparation program or an alternative preparation program, or pursuant to an agreement under the NASDTEC Interstate Contract, to applicants who have also met all ancillary requirements established by law or rule.

I. "Level 2 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued after satisfaction of all requirements for a Level 1 license and:

(1) requirements established by law or rule;

(2) three years of successful education experience within a five-year period; and

(3) satisfaction of requirements under R277-522 for teachers whose employment as a Level 1 licensed educator began after January 1, 2003 in a Utah public or accredited private school.

J. "Level 3 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued to an educator who holds a current Utah Level 2 license and has also received National Board Certification or a doctorate in education or in a field related to a content area in a unit of the public education system or an accredited private school, or holds a Speech-Language Pathology area of concentration and has obtained American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) certification.

K. "National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC)" is an educator information clearinghouse that maintains an interstate reciprocity agreement and database for its members regarding educators whose licenses have been suspended or revoked.

L. "National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)" is a nationally recognized organization which accredits

the education units providing baccalaureate and graduate degree programs for the preparation of teachers and other professional personnel for elementary and secondary schools.

M. "NCLB core academic subject" means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

N. "Pedagogical knowledge" means practices and strategies of teaching, classroom management, preparation and planning that are in addition to an educator's content knowledge of an academic discipline.

O. "Regional accreditation" means formal approval of a school that has met standards considered to be essential for the operation of a quality school program by the following organizations:

- (1) Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
- (2) New England Association of Schools and Colleges;
- (3) North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement;
- (4) Northwest Accreditation Commission;
- (5) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and
- (6) Western Association of Schools and colleges: Senior College Commission.

P. "Restricted endorsement" means a qualification based on content area knowledge obtained through a USOE-approved program of study or test and shall be available only to teachers in necessarily existent small school settings.

Q. "State-approved Endorsement Plan (SAEP)" means a plan in place developed between the USOE and a licensed educator to direct the completion of endorsement requirements by the educator.

R. "Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)" is a nationally recognized organization which provides accreditation of professional teacher education programs in institutions offering baccalaureate and graduate degrees for the preparation of K-12 teachers.

S. "USOE" means the Utah State Office of Education.

R277-503-2. Authority and Purpose.

A. This rule is authorized by Article X, Section 3 of the Utah Constitution, which places general control and supervision of the public schools under the Board, Section 53A-1-402(1)(a) which directs the Board to establish rules and minimum standards for the qualification and licensing of educators and ancillary personnel who provide direct student services, and Section 53A-1-401(3) which allows the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.

B. The purpose of this rule is to provide minimum eligibility requirements for applicants for teacher licenses and to provide explanation and criteria of various teacher licensing routes. The rule also provides criteria and procedures for licensed teachers to earn endorsements and the requirement for all applicants for licenses to have and pass criminal background checks.

R277-503-3. USOE Licensing Eligibility.

A. Traditional college/university license - A license applicant shall:

- (1) have completed an approved college/university teacher preparation program,
- (2) have been recommended for licensing, and
- (3) have satisfied all other requirements for educator licensing required by law; or

B. Alternative Licensing Route

(1) A license applicant shall have a bachelors degree or higher from an accredited higher education institution in an area related to the position he seeks; and

(2) A license applicant shall have skills, talents or abilities, as evaluated by the employing entity, making the applicant appropriate for a licensed teaching position and eligible to participate in an ARL program.

(3) While beginning an alternative licensing program, an applicant shall be approved for employment under a letter of authorization for a maximum of one school year and may be employed under an ARL license for an additional two years. An ARL program may not exceed three school years.

C. All license applicants seeking a Level 1 Utah educator license or an area of concentration or an endorsement in an NCLB core academic subject area shall submit passing score(s) on a rigorous Board-designated content test, where tests are available, prior to the issuance of a renewable license or endorsement.

D. For each endorsement in an NCLB core academic area to be posted on the license, secondary teachers are required to submit passing scores on a rigorous Board-designated content test(s), where test(s) are available.

E. An applicant shall submit electronic or original documentation of passing score(s) on a rigorous Board-designated content test to the USOE.

F. A licensure candidate that has completed a Utah university/college teacher preparation program prior to January 1, 2011 who submits a score below the final Utah state passing score on the test designated in R277-503-3C shall be issued a nonrenewable conditional Level 1 license. If the educator fails to submit a passing score on a rigorous Board-designated content test during the three-year duration of the conditional Level 1 license, the educator's license or endorsement shall lapse on the educator's designated renewal date.

G. Any licensure candidate, except those described in R277-503-3F, recommended for a Utah Level 1 license who does not submit a passing score on the test designated in R277-503-3C shall not be eligible for licensure until achieving a passing score.

R277-503-4. Licensing Routes.

Applicants who seek Utah educator licenses shall successfully complete accredited programs or legislatively mandated programs consistent with this rule.

A. Institution of higher education teacher preparation programs shall be:

(1) Nationally accredited by:

(a) NCATE; or

(b) TEAC; and

(2) As of January 1, 2012, approved by USOE to recommend for

licensure in the license area or endorsements or both in designated areas.

B. An applicant that meets the eligibility requirements in R277-503-3B and is assigned to teach exclusively in an online setting shall be eligible to begin the ARL program but upon completion of the ARL program shall earn a license area of concentration that is restricted to providing instruction in an online setting.

C. USOE Alternative Routes to Licensure (ARL)

(1) To be eligible to begin the ARL program, an applicant for an elementary or early childhood school position shall have a bachelors degree and at least 27 semester hours of applicable content courses distributed among elementary curriculum areas. Elementary curriculum areas are provided under R277-700-4. To proceed from temporary license status, an ARL applicant shall submit a score on a Board-designated content test to be used as a diagnostic tool and as part of the development of a professional plan and the issuance of the ARL license.

(2) To be eligible to begin the ARL program, applicants for secondary school positions shall hold a degree major or major equivalent directly related to the assignment. To proceed from temporary license status, an ARL license applicant shall submit a score on a Board-designated content test, where available, to be used as a diagnostic tool and as part of the development of a professional plan and the issuance of the ARL license.

(3) Licensing by Agreement

(a) An individual employed by an LEA shall satisfy the minimum requirements of R277-503-3 as a teacher with appropriate skills, training or ability for an identified licensed teaching position in the district.

(b) An applicant shall obtain an ARL application for licensing from the USOE or USOE web site.

(c) After evaluation of candidate transcript(s) and rigorous Board-designated content test score, the USOE ARL advisors and the candidate shall determine the specific content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge required of the license applicant to satisfy the requirements for licensing.

(d) The USOE ARL advisors may identify institution of higher education courses, district sponsored coursework, Board-approved professional development, or Board-approved competency tests to prepare or indicate content, content-specific, and developmentally-appropriate pedagogical knowledge required for licensing.

(e) An applicant who has been employed as an educator under a competency-based license or as a full-time instructional paraeducator may offer that experience in lieu of one or more pedagogy courses as follows:

(i) The applicant has had at least three years of experience as an educator or paraeducator;

(ii) The applicant's experience has been successful based on documentation from the LEA; and

(iii) The USOE and employing LEA has approved the applicant's experience in lieu of pedagogy course(s).

(f) The employing LEA shall assign a trained mentor to work with the applicant for licensing by agreement.

(g) The LEA shall supervise and assess the license applicant's classroom performance during a minimum one school year full-time employment experience. The LEA may request assistance from an institution of higher education or the USOE in the monitoring and assessment.

(h) The LEA shall assess the license applicant's disposition as a teacher following a minimum one school year full-time teaching experience. The LEA may request assistance in this assessment; and

(i) The USOE ARL advisors shall annually review and evaluate the license applicant following training, assessments or course work, and the full-time teaching experience and evaluation by the LEA.

(j) Consistent with evidence and documentation received, the USOE ARL advisor may recommend the license applicant to the Board for a Level 1 educator license.

(4) USOE Licensing by Competency

(a) An LEA employs an individual as a teacher with appropriate skills, training or ability for an identified licensed teaching position in the LEA who satisfies the minimum requirements of R277-503-3.

(b) An employing LEA, in consultation with the applicant and the USOE, shall identify Board-approved content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge examinations. The applicant shall pass designated examinations demonstrating the applicant's adequate preparation and readiness for licensing.

(c) The employing LEA shall assign a trained mentor to work with the applicant for licensing by competency.

(d) The LEA shall monitor and assess the license applicant's classroom performance during a minimum one-year full-time teaching experience.

(e) The LEA shall assess the license applicant's disposition for teaching following a minimum one-year full-time teaching experience.

(f) The LEA may request assistance in the monitoring or assessment of a license applicant's classroom performance or disposition for teaching.

(g) Following the one-year training period, the LEA and USOE shall verify all aspects of preparation (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, classroom performance skills, and disposition for teaching) to the USOE.

(h) If all evidence/documentation is complete and satisfactory, the USOE shall recommend the applicant for a Level 1 educator license.

(5) USOE ARL candidates under R277-503-4C(3) and (4) may teach under a letter of authorization for a maximum of one year. The letter of authorization shall expire after the first year on June 30 when the ARL candidate submits documentation of progress in the program, and the candidate shall be issued an ARL license.

(6) The ARL license may be extended annually for two subsequent school years with documentation of progress in the ARL program.

(7) Documentation shall include, specifically, a copy of the supervisor's successful end-of-year evaluation, copies of transcripts and test results or both showing completion of required

coursework, verification of working with a trained mentor, and satisfaction of the full-time full year experience.

D. LEA specific competency-based licenses:

(1) An LEA may apply to the Board for a Level 1 competency-based license to fill a position in the LEA. The application shall demonstrate that other licensing routes for the applicant are untenable or unreasonable.

(2) The employing LEA shall request a Level 1 competency-based license no later than 60 days after the date of the individual's first day of employment.

(3) The application for the Level 1 competency-based license from the LEA for an individual to teach one or more core academic subjects shall provide documentation of:

(a) the individual's bachelors degree; and

(b) for a K-6 grade teacher, the satisfactory results of the rigorous state test including subject knowledge and teaching skills in the required core academic subjects under Section 53A-6-104.5(3)(ii) as approved by the Board; or

(c) for the teacher in grades 7-12, demonstration of a high level of competency in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by completion of an academic major, a graduate degree, course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, advanced certification or credentialing, or results or scores of a rigorous state core academic subject test, similar to the test required under R277-503-3E, in each of the core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches.

(4) The application for the Level 1 competency-based license from the LEA for non-core teachers in grades K-12 shall provide documentation of:

(a) a bachelors degree, associates degree or skill certification; and

(b) skills, talents or abilities specific to the teaching assignment, as determined by the LEA.

(5) Following receipt of documentation and consistent with Section 53A-6-104.5(2), the USOE shall approve a Level 1 competency-based license.

(6) If an individual with a Level 1 competency-based license leaves the LEA before the end of the employment period, the LEA shall notify the USOE Licensing Section regarding the end-of-employment date.

(7) The individual's Level 1 competency-based license shall be valid only in the LEA that originally requested the competency-based license.

(8) The written copy of the Level 1 competency-based license shall prominently state the name of the LEA followed by LEVEL 1 - LEA SPECIFIC - COMPETENCY-BASED LICENSE.

(9) An LEA may change the assignment of a competency-based license holder; notice to USOE shall be required and additional competency-based documentation may be required for the teacher to remain qualified.

(10) a Level 1 competency-based license is equivalent to the Level 1 license as described in R277-500 and R277-502 as to length and professional development expectations and subject to the same renewal procedures except that an individual may renew a Level 1

competency-based license despite the limitations of R277-504-3D.

(11) A Level 2 competency-based license may be issued to a Level 1 competency-based license holder if that individual successfully completes the Entry years Enhancement program as detailed in R277-522.

(12) A Level 2 competency-based license is equivalent to the Level 2 license as described in R277-500 and R277-502 as to length and professional development expectations.

(13) A Level 3 competency-based license may be issued to a Level 2 competency-based license holder if that individual holds a doctorate in education or in a field related to a content unit of the public education system from an accredited institution.

(14) A Level 3 competency-based license is equivalent to the Level 3 license as described in R277-500 and R277-502 as to length and professional development expectations.

(15) If an individual holds a Utah license, the application shall be subject to additional USOE review based upon the following criteria:

- (a) license level;
- (b) current license status;
- (c) area of concentration and endorsements on Utah license;

and

- (d) circumstances justifying the LEA specific license.

(16) If the application is not approved based on a USOE review of the criteria provided in R277-503-4C(11), appropriate licensure procedures shall be recommended to the requesting LEA. The applicant may be required to renew an expired license, apply for an endorsement, pass appropriate Board approved tests consistent with R277-503-3C, obtain an additional area of concentration, apply to Alternative Route to Licensure, or satisfy other reasonable standards.

R277-503-5. Endorsement Routes.

A. An applicant shall successfully complete one of the following for endorsement:

(1) a USOE-approved institution of higher education educator preparation program with endorsement(s); or

(2) assessment, approval and recommendation by a designated and subject-appropriate USOE specialist. The USOE shall be responsible for final recommendation and approval; or

(3) a USOE-approved Utah institution of higher education or Utah LEA-sponsored endorsement program which includes content knowledge and content-specific pedagogical knowledge approved by the USOE.

(a) The university or LEA shall be responsible for final review and recommendation.

(b) The USOE shall be responsible for final approval.

B. A restricted endorsement shall be available and limited to teachers in necessarily existent small schools as determined under R277-445. Teacher qualifications shall include at least nine semester hours of USOE-approved university-level courses in each course taught by the teacher holding a restricted endorsement.

C. All provisions that directly affect the health and safety of students required for endorsements, such as prerequisites for

drivers education teachers or coaches, shall apply to applicants seeking endorsements through all routes under this rule.

D. Prior to an individual taking courses, exams or seeking a recommendation in the ARL licensing program, the individual shall have LEA and USOE authorization.

R277-503-6. Additional Provisions.

A. All programs or assessments used in applicant preparation shall meet national professional educator standards such as those developed by NCATE and TEAC.

B. All educators licensed under this rule shall also:

(1) complete the background check required under Section 53A-6-401;

(2) satisfy the professional development requirements of R277-502; and

(3) be subject to all Utah licensing requirements and professional standards.

C. An applicant may satisfy the student teaching/clinical experience requirement for licensing through successful completion of either the licensing by agreement or by competency route.

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